

apparatus transforms the steel fibers into a web. In an alternative embodiment, the drawn steel fibers may be individualized to some extent before being delivered to the random-feeder apparatus, such as by a carding operation. The web is then sintered separately and compacted by means of a cold isostatic pressing operation carried out at a pressure higher than 2000 bar to obtain a porosity lower than 55 %, e.g. lower than 50 %, e.g. 46 %. This results in the first layer 12.

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int

In the Claims:

In accordance with 37 CFR § 1.121, please substitute for original claims 1 and 7 the following rewritten versions of the same claims, as amended. The changes are shown explicitly in the attached "Marked Up Version Showing Changes Made."

Please amend the following claims.

1. (Amended) A layered filtering structure (10) having a filter inlet side and a filter outlet side, said layered filtering structure (10) comprising at least a first layer (12) on a second layer (13), each layer comprising a web of metal fibers which has been sintered, said two layers (12, 13) being in contact with each other, wherein said first layer, most close to the filter inlet side has a porosity below 55 %, and wherein said second layer, closer to the filter outlet side has a porosity which is at least 20 % greater than the porosity of said first layer.

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7. (Amended) A structure according to claim 1, wherein said structure is sandwiched between a first wire net (14) and a second wire net (15), said first wire net comprising wires having a diameter d1, said second wire net comprising wires having a diameter d2, said first net (14) being located at the inlet side, said second wire net (15) having meshes and being located at the outlet side, and first wire net having meshes which are smaller than the meshes of the second wire net and the diameter d1 of the wires of the first wire net being thicker than the diameter d2 of the wires of the second wire net.

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